

Larysa Kuzmenko is a Toronto-based composer, pianist and Juno nominee. Her music has been commissioned, performed, broadcast and recorded by many outstanding musicians all over the world. She has appeared as a pianist in several countries, and has performed at Carnegie Hall, St. Lawrence Centre, England, USA, Roy Thomson Hall, Massey Hall and several other Canadian venues. She is currently on staff at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, where she teaches piano, harmony, and composition.



Her works demonstrate a strong affinity towards the mainstream of classical music. She imbues her music with a strong melodic sense, and a firm rooting in traditional, albeit extended tonal processes. She has been awarded commissions from the Ontario Arts Council, CBC, Laidlaw foundation, and from private commissioners. She was a composer in residence at the Memorial University in Newfoundland in 2010. Her music is published by Boosey and Hawkes, Plangere, and Frederic Harris. Her solo piano works "In Memoriam to the Victims of Chornobyl" and "Mysterious Summer's Night" have become standard repertoire for pianists. These pieces receive over a hundred performances a year. Her choral works "Winds" and "Stars" are performed regularly all over the world with sales of over a thousand copies a year.

In 2011, Larysa received a Juno nomination for her "Piano Concerto" which was recorded on CD by well-known Ukrainian Canadian pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico. Most recently, she was commissioned, through a grant from the Ontario Arts Council, to write a work for the Toronto Symphony's 90th anniversary. This work, "Behold the Night" was composed for the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Toronto Children's Choir. It was extremely well received by the audience and was broadcast on CBC. Oscar winner Christopher Plummer was on the same show as the premiere of "Behold the Night". During the after show dinner, he told the composer that "Shakespeare would have been very proud of Larysa Kuzmenko's musical setting of the text to 'A Midsummer's Night Dream'". Critic Colin Eatock from the Globe and Mail wrote, "The work is as charming and colourful as any film score by Danny Elfman or John Williams".

Some prominent ensembles and soloists who have performed her works include, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, directed by Peter Oundjian and Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra directed by Bramwell Tovey, Thunder Bay Orchestra directed by Jeffrey Moule, Gryphon Trio, Composer's Orchestra directed by Gary Kulesha, cellists Shauna Rolston, Kristine Bogyo, and Kaori Yamagami, pianists Anton Kuerti and Andrew Burashko, the Elmer Esler Singers, and the Elora Festival Singers just to name a few.

"Rhapsody" for string quartet was commissioned by Mooredale concerts in 2011. It was premiered in Toronto by the Afiara string quartet on April 15, 2012 in Walter Hall.

Larysa recently completed an OAC commission for the Metis Quartet. This work is based on an aboriginal story for solo violin, cello, viola and voice with orchestra. It will be premiered during the Pan Am games in 2015 in Toronto.

"One Sister Have I in our House" for Women's chorus and piano was commissioned and premiered in Austin Texas by the Tapestry Singers in 2011.

"Gloria" (2013) for Women's Chorus and Piano. It was jointly commissioned and premiered by Bella Voce Women's Chorus of Vermont in Burlington Vermont on May 17, 2014, in Toronto, by the University of Toronto's Women's Chamber Choir on October 19 and December 7, 2014 and in Vancouver, by Elektra Women's Choir on November 29, 2014.

"Metropolis Overture" (2014) for Orchestra, was commissioned by the Mississauga Symphony Orchestra. It was premiered by the MSO and conducted by Denis Mastromonaco on October 18, 2014 in the Living Arts Centre in Mississauga. This work celebrated Mississauga's 40th anniversary.

"Behold the Night" (2011) for Orchestra and Children's Chorus had its USA premiere in New Hampshire on November 29, 2014. It was performed by the New Hampshire Philharmonic and the Pinkerton Academy Student Choir in the Stockbridge Theater at Pinkerton Academy New Hampshire. It was conducted by Mark Latham.

Larysa Kuzmenko's "Golden Harvest" is a 30 minute Oratorio for orchestra, SATB, solo soprano and solo baritone. The work was commissioned by Laurence Ewashko and funded by the Shevchenko Foundation. It commemorates the 125th anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada. The work was premiered on March 18 and 19, 2016 at Centennial Hall, Winnipeg. Conducted by Alexander Mickelthwaite. Performed by soprano Andriana Chuchman, baritone Michale Nyby and the Mennonite Festival Chorus.

A newly arranged, and shortened piano quintet version, was performed during the Ottawa International Chamber Music festival on July 22, 2016 at the Dominion-Chalmers United Church. This arrangement was performed by members of the Gryphon Trio, violinist Noemi Racine Gaudreault, violist Graham Oppenheimer, soprano Monica Whicher, baritone Russell Braun, and the Ewashko Singers conducted by Laurence Ewashko.

Larysa Kuzmenko is married to Canadian composer/pianist/conductor Gary Kulesha.